



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Public Health

Office of Emergency Medical Services

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## **ADVISORY**

TO: MA Licensed Ambulance Services  
Accredited Training Institutions  
EMT Instructor/Coordinators

FROM: Abdullah Rehayem, Acting Director

SUBJ: Potential Hare Traction Splint Problem

DATE: November 28, 2006

The Department has been advised of at least one instance in which a recently purchased Hare traction splint failed during application. The seam on the Velcro ischial strap is apparently heat welded, and after several months of use (repeated applications in a training scenario) the heat seams failed. During a real-world application, this would result in a complete loss of mechanical traction.

All ambulance services and EMT training institutions are advised to check the integrity of the heat seams in the newer model Hare traction leg splint, Velcro ischial straps on a regular basis (i.e. monthly at a minimum and/or during daily ambulance checks). The test should involve manual tension on the ischial strap to make sure the heat seal is intact before actual use on a patient, and during periodic equipment checks.

Any defective splint must be taken out of service and a medical device failure notice should be sent to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Visit the FDA website at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) for detailed information. If the failure occurred while providing patient care during an ambulance run, a DPH/OEMS "Serious Incident and Accident Report" may also need to be filed. Visit the DPH/OEMS website at [www.mass.gov/dph/oems](http://www.mass.gov/dph/oems) for form and further information.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 617-753-7300. Thank you for your cooperation in continuing to ensure the safety of our EMS patients in the Commonwealth.